



March 2005

**CONTACT
CONGRESSMAN
GILLMOR**

In Washington:

1203 Longworth HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-6405

In Ohio:

96 South Washington Street
Suite 400
Tiffin, Ohio 44883
(419) 448-9016

613 West Third Street
Defiance, Ohio 43512
(419) 782-1996

130 Shady Lane Drive
Norwalk, Ohio 44857
(419) 668-0206

Toll Free in Ohio:

Phone: 1-800-541-6446
Fax: 1-800-278-8203

Online:

www.house.gov/gillmor

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Gillmor Washington Update

As your Representative in Congress, I am proud to represent Ohio's Fifth Congressional District in Washington, DC.

In order to keep the citizens of the Fifth District better informed and up to date on my activities in Washington, DC and back home in Ohio, I have published the March edition of my monthly newsletter. It is my goal to provide you with the information you need to stay informed on the issues important to Ohio. In this edition of my Monthly Update, I have focused on the important events that have taken place in the month of February and inform you of upcoming March events in the Fifth District. I hope that you will find this information beneficial. Please contact me should you have any questions or comments.

On Your Mind: Outlining the Debate over Social Security Reform

Following the President's State of the Union Address, I have received numerous phone calls, emails and letters regarding the Social Security debate. While the public debate over strengthening Social Security has just begun, I would like to address some of your concerns here.

The most important item to note in regards to Social Security reform is that the program is sound for today's seniors and those nearing retirement. President Bush has pledged that today's retirees will not see a decrease in their benefits and he has my complete support. However, Social Security must be significantly strengthened for our children and grandchildren.

Social Security is mainly supported by payroll taxes on the wages earned by today's work-



In February, Congressman Gillmor spoke with members of the Upper Sandusky Rotary club regarding Social Security reforms.

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ers which are used to pay benefits to today's seniors collecting from Social Security. Although the Social Security Trust Fund is currently running surpluses, with income exceeding benefits, that will change in less than a decade when payments to beneficiaries exceed income. By 2042, the Social Security Trustees project that the Trust Funds will be completely depleted.

Social Security was created for a different world than we have today. In 1935, there were over 40 workers paying into Social Security for each beneficiary. By 1950, there were 16 workers paying into the system for every one beneficiary. Today, there are about three, and when younger workers retire, there will only be two. In addition, the average life expectancy of Americans has risen nearly 16 years since 1935. While the Social Security payroll tax has risen from just 1 percent in 1935 to over 12 percent today, the rate of return has dropped to a paltry 1.6 percent.

I believe that investing money in voluntary personal accounts and allowing younger workers to decide how their money is invested is an idea that deserves serious consideration. This is not, however, a new idea, as many workers today invest a portion of their own salary into Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) and 401(k)s for a greater return than what the Social Security system offers. In fact, the personal accounts which President Bush has recommended are fashioned after the Thrift Savings Plan, which offers the opportunity for safe investment by all federal employees and Members of Congress.

Voluntary personal accounts invested in safe low-cost, broad-based investment funds will earn higher rates of return than the traditional system and help workers enhance their personal savings. These accounts will allow all Americans to create and own a nest egg which can be passed on to their children, offering every American the opportunity to achieve their dreams.

It is important that we begin a serious dialogue and debate today on the future of Social Security and how to strengthen the program. To wait until the most successful social program in the history of our great nation falls into financial collapse would be a travesty to future and near retirees. According to the Social Security Trustees, doing nothing to fix the Social Security system will cost us, as well as our children and grandchildren, an estimated \$10.4 trillion. The longer we wait to take action, the more difficult and expensive the changes will be. Rest assured however, that throughout this debate I will remain dedicated to ensuring that any changes respect the needs of seniors who depend on the Social Security program for their benefits.

Your Congress: Receiving the Friend of the Nationals Park Award

In February, I had the honor of accepting the Friend of the National Parks Award from the National Parks Conservation Association for my work during the 108th Congress. This award was given to 191 members of the U.S. House who actively worked to preserve and protect the integrity of the National Park System.

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I was very pleased to receive the Friend of the National Parks Award this year. I believe very strongly in the need for our national parks and our responsibility to maintain their beauty for future generations.

In the U.S. House, recipients were selected based on their vote on at least four of six park-related issues. As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Environment and Hazardous Materials on the Energy and Commerce Committee, I often face issues of environmental concern. From my chairmanship, I oversee legislation relating to environmental protection, solid waste, hazardous waste, mining, oil, gas and coal combustion waster and noise pollution.

I am especially grateful for this award because I have visited many of our National Parks and I am planning a family trip this year to show my children some of the beauty our parks offer. I would encourage anyone to fully experience our National Parks firsthand.



Congressman Paul Gillmor (R- Old Fort) receives the Friend of the National Parks Award for his service in the 108th Congress.

In Congress: Presidential Sites Improvement Act Introduced



Photo: Additional information on the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center in Fremont, Ohio can be found online at www.rbhayes.org.

too important to just forget about and our bill ensures that the federal government will see that they are held to a standard worthy of a presidential site.

As the Fifth District is home to the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center in Fremont, *The Presidential Sites Improvement Act* would make necessary improvements right in our own backyard. This measure extends much needed matching funds to assist the stewards of these sites to

In February, I joined Congressman Mike Ross (D-AR) in introducing *The Presidential Sites Improvement Act* in the U.S. House. This bill establishes a program to award grants to improve and maintain sites honoring Presidents of the United States.

Presidential sites are instrumental to understanding our history and many are in desperate need of modification. These landmarks are

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ensure that they remain viable, attractive and accessible places for education and commemoration.

In Congress: Municipal Deposits Bill Introduced

In February, I introduced the Municipal Deposit Insurance Protection Act of 2005. This legislation provides in-state public deposits with greater Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) protection through increased coverage levels. The bill would ensure FDIC insurance coverage for 80



percent of the public deposit beyond the standard level of FDIC coverage (currently \$100,000 per deposit) up to two million dollars.

This increased coverage will help local communities keep public moneys in their local financial institutions. These new deposits would then allow local banks to offer more loans for cars, homes, education and

other needs to members of the community. It must be remembered that this money came from local communities and should remain there to contribute to the local economy.

Currently, many municipalities must choose between placing their deposits in local banks in an effort to foster economic development or placing their money in large out-of-state institutions with the guarantee of FDIC coverage. Under current law in Ohio, institutions are required to hold securities as collateral against public deposits. This makes it harder for community and small banks to compete for these funds with larger banks. Many small banks are so loaned-up that they do not have the available securities to use as collateral.

This requirement also leaves taxpayer funds at risk. In cases of fraud, such as occurred at the Oakwood Deposit Bank in Paulding County, collateralization is not adequate insurance, as many bonds and securities appearing on an institution's balance sheet may not actually be held. Many local municipalities and other public entities that held deposits at the Oakwood Deposit Bank lost thousands of dollars that could have been recovered if the FDIC did not cap its coverage at \$100,000.

This Municipal Deposits Bill returns the power to our communities to keep valuable deposits in our local economies while protecting taxpayer funds. This bill passed the U.S. House in the 107th and 108th Congresses but failed to receive a vote in the U.S. Senate. I look forward to healthy debate in both the U.S. House and Senate in the 109th Congress.

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Focus on the Fifth: Accepting Congressional Internship Applications

I am now accepting applications for summer internships in my Defiance, Tiffin, and Washington D.C. offices. Each year, I have a limited number of internship positions available in each of my offices.

The opportunity to intern in any of my offices can be a very rewarding experience for any college student. Internships offer an invaluable glimpse into the inner-workings of the U.S. House. I encourage any interested student from the Fifth District to contact my Washington office for assistance with internships.

To be eligible, an applicant must be a resident of Ohio's Fifth Congressional District and attending a college or university during the calendar year of application. Volunteer interns are asked to commit at least ten hours per week for the duration of the internship. College juniors and seniors are strongly encouraged to apply.

Paid internships may be available in the Washington, D.C. office during June and July, depending on availability. To be eligible for a paid internship, an applicant must first complete a volunteer internship. If you would like to pursue a Congressional internship, please visit my website at www.house.gov/gillmor and click on the "for students" tab or contact my Washington D.C. office at (202) 225-6405.



Focus on the Fifth: Four Fifth District Students Receive U.S. Service Academy Appointments

One of my most important responsibilities as your Congressman is to nominate young men and women from the Fifth District for admission to our nation's service academies. I am pleased to announce that since finalizing their applications and receiving nominations last year, four Fifth District students have received appointments to U.S. Service Academies. I had the pleasure of speaking with each of the four students who have been offered appointments to the U.S. Service Academies to congratulate them on their achievements.

- **Brandon Burner** (Tiffin), the son of Donald and Nancy Burner, has been accepted to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.
 - While attending Tiffin Columbian High School, Brandon Burner excelled academically by achieving a 4.066 grade point average. Brandon is an honor roll student, an Eagle Scout and a member of the football, track and field, and intramural wrestling teams.

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- **Mary Guzowski** (Tiffin), the daughter of Bruce and Jeanette Guzowski, has been accepted to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.
 - While attending Tiffin Columbian High School, Mary Guzowski attained a 3.72 grade point average. She is an active swimmer and a member of the soccer team. Mary is an honor roll student, a member of the National Honor Society and the Marching Band.



Congressman and Dr. Gillmor are pictured with Brandon Burner, Mary Guzowski and Dustin Nedolast

- **Dustin Nedolast** (Tiffin), the son of Daniel and Rebecca Nedolast, has been accepted to the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO.
 - At St. Wendelin High School, Dustin Nedolast excelled with a 3.81 grade point average. Dustin is a member of the National Honor Society, student council, varsity wrestling, football, and baseball teams.
- **Quinten Wise** (Waterville), the son of Steven Wise and Pat Burnhimer, has been accepted to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.
 - While attending Anthony Wayne High School, Quinten excelled with a 3.95 grade point average. Quinten is an honor roll student and a



Quinten Wise is pictured with his parents alongside Congressman Gillmor and his wife, Karen.

member of the National Honor Society. Quinten has been class president for four years and is a varsity baseball and football player.

Each year, with the assistance of my Fifth District Academy Advisory Board, I nominate qualified young men and women for appointments to the United States service academies. Admission to the academies is a two-pronged process. In addition to the congressional nomination, a successful candidate for appointment must also complete the individual academy's admissions process. Applicants are evaluated on academic achievement, demonstrated leadership ability, physical ability, and character.

In addition to the congressional nomination, a successful candidate for appointment must also complete the individual academy's admissions process. Applicants are evaluated on academic achievement, demonstrated leadership ability, physical ability, and character.

This year, I nominated eighteen young men and women from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District for appointments to the four United States service academies.

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SAVE THE DATE: Upcoming Academy Information Nights

Save the Date! I have scheduled United States service academy information nights for prospective applicants in Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. The meetings will be held at Leipsic High School on Thursday, March 17, 2005 and at Clyde High School on Tuesday, March 22, 2005 from 7:00 until 9:00 p.m.

Representatives from the admissions offices of the U.S. Military, Naval, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine Academies have been invited to attend the information night. I would encourage all young people from the Fifth District who are interested in an academy appointment to attend the meeting.

The service academy information nights will afford interested students the opportunity to meet with academy representatives, as well as representatives from my office to learn about the academy nomination and selection process.

One of my most fulfilling responsibilities is to nominate young men and women from the Fifth district for admission to our nation's service academies. My staff will be on hand to answer questions and may also be reached by calling my Tiffin office, toll-free, at (800) 541-6446.



Focus on the Fifth: Six District Fire Departments Receive Over \$310,000 in February Grants

In the past month, six district volunteer fire departments received \$310,162 in grant money from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Office for Domestic Preparedness.

These funds, made available by Congress, will be used to increase the effectiveness of fire fighting operations, fire fighter health and safety programs, new fire apparatus, EMS programs, and fire prevention and safety programs. Some awards may also be used towards training, equipment, wellness and fitness, and modifications to fire stations and facilities.

The six fire departments receiving awards include:

Galion	\$26,894
Glandorf	\$18,495



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New London	\$43,200
Pioneer	\$59,355
Fostoria	\$88,956
Convoy	\$73,262

These grant monies will improve the effectiveness of firefighters in each of these areas and benefit citizens across the Fifth District of Ohio. Firefighters play a critical role ensuring the safety of our communities and this money will help to deliver the resources necessary to excel in their mission.

Departments interested in applying for the 2005 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program during the March 7 - April 8 application period should go to www.firegrantsupport.com.

Congressman Gillmor's March Casework Onsite Schedule

One of my goals as Congressman is to make sure that casework services are readily available to all my constituents. Unfortunately, the size of our sixteen county district makes travel to my Defiance, Tiffin, or Norwalk offices prohibitive for many. In order to ensure that my staff is accessible to all my constituents, I have scheduled casework onsites in Paulding and Van Wert Counties as follows:

Wednesday, March 16, 2005

10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Melrose Village Hall
705 State Street

MELROSE

Wednesday, March 16, 2005

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Delphos City Hall
608 North Canal Street

DELPHOS



If you are in the area, I encourage you to stop by and my staff will be happy to assist you with any problems you are having with the federal government.

Contact Me

If you have any suggestions on topics you would like to see addressed in my monthly updates, require any additional information, or would like to inform me of your views on matters concerning the federal government, please contact me anytime in Washington, DC or in any of my Ohio offices.

If you wish to forward your questions or concerns via U.S. mail, please address your correspondence to one of my Ohio offices as mail sent to the Longworth House Office Building in Washington is subject to a lengthy screening process and may not reach my office in a timely manner.